

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATEVER DOTTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We commend to our readers Dr. J. Stenson Hooker's new book, 'The Higher Medicine' (London: The Celtic Press, Chancery-lane), not as a guide to Medicine, which it is not, but as a very wholesome book about medicine and medical treatment, and as a generally useful and really interesting book concerning the whole field of human maladies, from a sane and sunny point of view.

The author seems to stand aside, and look on upon 'the medical world,' not so much as a citizen of it, but as an observer with full knowledge, and a critic with power to guide. His nineteen chapters include surveys of such subjects as 'Refining Influences in Life Generally,' 'The Decline of Drugging,' 'Homœopathy,' 'The Increasing Growth of Vegetarianism,' 'Massage,' 'The Man behind the Method,' 'Hydro-Therapeutics,' 'Psycho-Therapeutics,' 'The Power of Prayer.'

The writer is a good deal of an optimist. He believes in the upward trend, and in the finer forces as coming more and more into play, for the evolution of man into a finer condition both of body and mind. In this direction he is looking all the time, in his outlook upon our maladies and our emancipation.

The book we noticed lately, Fielding Hall's 'The Inward Light,' is full of choice thoughts exquisitely expressed. We feel moved to regale our readers with one occasionally. The Burmese philosophy has a good deal of serene strength and quiet happiness in it. Here is a suggestion of how these sunny-hearted people feel about life's sorrows:—

Be therefore of good courage. Nothing is irreparable; everything passes, evil as well as good. Take whatever punishment is given you like a man and bear it with a laugh. That is their creed. There is one certain medicine for ills, and that is laughter. Do not let the trouble of the body eat into the mind. Keep your mind free. Sometimes this courage and this happiness will cure the ill. The body is not always master of the mind: it should be the servant. The mind should be the master. The will should dominate. It can control in many things the body: it can make cures of illness. The West has suddenly discovered this as a new thing: the East knew it always. It can by sheer will sometimes restore the health. Not always. That time when Will shall be the Lord of All is very far from us as yet. We must have science as well as will. But if it cannot cure it can bring forgetfulness, an anodyne. The child who falls and hurts itself is caught within its mother's arms and told, 'now laugh.' It laughs: the pain-drawn lips relax, and then the pain is gone—forgotten. Laugh! Time will make all things right.

A writer in 'The Christian Register' gives a rather unusual view of the goal of Liberal Religion. He doubts

whether it can be localised in any ecclesiastical sub-division, and thinks it is rather a state of mind than an institution. 'In order to realise it we must shift our attention from the church or sect to which we belong to the fundamental spiritual realities which are shared in common by all of humanity and have been inherited by all races.' The fundamental reality is higher than the transient conception of it: and the great matter is not the special intellectual belief concerning the mysterious power we call 'God,' but the common spiritual reverence before it. He continues:—

The truth of the matter is that a man whose beliefs are described as atheistical or agnostic may have as profound a realisation of the sublimity of the universe and the majesty of the forces directing it, and may consequently have a mind of as truly reverent spirit, as the man who believes in a personal divinity. Consequently, agnosticism and atheism, though they do not *per se* possess religious validity, should not lead to our classing some wise and good men as entirely outside the fold of religion. When we consider the millions who now follow the teaching of Confucius as their sole religious guide, the folly of not calling him a religious man, despite his want of theistical belief, is at once apparent. Nor are the traits revealed by the writings of Charles Darwin those of a man wanting in the fundamental religious sentiments.

Considering religion from the cosmological side, then, religious unity ought to exist between all who maintain a reverent attitude toward the mysterious forces behind Nature, whatever be the views maintained with regard to a divinity. For that mysterious first cause is the fundamental reality of which the theistical hypothesis is but an interpretation, and that interpretation is not shared by all of humanity, though the reality is known to every man possessed of any natural humility.

The same thing is true of the ethical side of life. The vital matter is appreciation of and reverence before the moral order of the Universe, and not any special belief concerning the sanction and ordainment of it.

The 'Journal of Man' prints an incisive Paper on the sometimes necessary, occasionally sordid, and, perhaps two or three times in a life, wicked question 'Will it pay?' It may seem rather severe, but the Paper takes high ground and sets up a high standard. It says:—

Against the sordid mass that in ignorance of law pursues its way and grinds itself to pieces, having eyes and seeing not, ears and hearing not, are set the effulgent lives of those who never ask how much money there is in it, how much fame there is in it, how much glory there is in it. These are the lighthouses casting their beams over the struggling hordes of self-seeking, soul-prostituting men and women, to show to them and to make good the purposes of the Creator in man that OM is in His world and that every creature in it belongs to His body and is a part of His members. His countenance, as He works Himself out through the handicraft He hath made and peopled the world with, is composed of the great Host that is no longer a hostage but hath earned liberty, equality and eternal happiness by serving those divine, eternal principles and ideas that have actuated their lives and made them what they are.

'Will it pay?' then applies only to him or her who chooses to figure in and covet dress from which the gold has been taken. Of all men the most miserable are those who can, in this day and age, with the blazing lights of altruistic works everywhere about them, burrow their noses into the clay and ask of it, 'Will it pay?'

One of the most necessary lessons poor conceited human nature has to learn is that we know nothing as it really is, and that we have not absolutely captured a single truth. All we can do is to approximate to the truth, to make small voyages of discovery, to do what the poor woman is said to have done to Jesus—touch the hem of his garment if perchance she might find healing. So all we can hope is to touch the outermost border of truth, happy if we can accomplish even that.

How modest that should make us! how reticent! how cautious in our denial! how joyous in our hope! 'Here, in the body pent,' we are 'cabined, cribbed, confined.' We shall get into the open some day, and see all God's stars.

'Broken Shells Gathered on the Shores of Thought' is the rather thin and sentimental title of a tiny book by F. J. Mott (London: Gay and Bird): but the phrase 'Broken Shells' refers, we suppose, to the character of the contents of the dainty little volume, which contains about ninety pages and as many subjects of thought, all pleasant and profitable: some highly suggestive.

Here is a 'thought' that is by no means 'broken':—

May it not be that this earthly life represents the first development of the conscious by accumulations of energy from the unconscious? Here the force-wave, which has attained, by concentration of energy, to self-consciousness and abstract thought, is still associated with those waves which have no consciousness, from which it sprang, and which it calls 'external nature' or 'matter.' It may be that when death severs that connection the conscious wave passes into a stage in which it is associated only with other conscious waves, and where 'matter' has therefore no place.

Here is another, of a different kind, a gem of picturesque thinking, and quite complete:—

LIFE AND DEATH.

An ancient grave-yard, kirk and manse and farm
Gone and forgotten; only a ruined tomb
And three worn headstones and one shattered tree.
The rest a wilderness of bush and blossom,
Blue meadow crane's-bill, mallows pink and purple,
Roses and hedge bells, and the long sweet grass
That scents the summer air. Life burying death
Beneath exuberant beauty. Two young lovers
Wild with new joy are singing in the sun,
The broken tomb their throne in paradise.

This too, though short, is complete. It occupies a whole page:—

'OUR FATHER'S GATE.'

We are but children in the School of Life,
And, when the day is done, with joyful steps
We cross the shining fields that lie between,
Enter our Father's gate and are at home.

MRS. PLACE-VEARY IN SOUTH AFRICA.—A Port Elizabeth, Natal, newspaper, of January 28th, gives a report of a packed meeting, held in the Town Hall, at which Mrs. Place-Veary gave an address and thirteen clairvoyant descriptions, eleven of which were instantly recognised. It is said that the audience consisted mainly of the thinking people of the town.

SPEAKING at Browning Hall, Walworth, recently, Professor Bottomley said that if he, as a scientist, were asked to say what life was he would answer, 'A metabolic activity of protoplasm,' but that, candidly speaking, he knew no more than his hearers did. He could not tell them how the green colouring matter in the plant converted the sun's rays into its own life-principle, though all scientists believed that it did so. We think it is an improper use of the word 'life' to say that it is metabolic activity; this activity, which we know as growth and development of living tissue, is a sign of the presence and action of life, but it is not life itself. Life is that which produces the activity of growth in matter which would, if life were not acting, change in another way, in the direction of disintegration and decay. Professor Bottomley's definition applies to vital action, but this is only an effect or manifestation of life, and life itself is a form of energy beyond the reach of human analysis,

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held at the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, MARCH 5TH,

WHEN

Mr. Angus McArthur and Mr. H. Biden Steele

WILL RELATE

'INTERESTING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Addresses will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings:—

Mar. 19.—REV. JOHN OATES, on 'The Spiritual Teachings of the Poets—Wordsworth, Browning, and Shelley.'

Apr. 2.—MISS LILIAN WHITING (author of 'After her Death,' 'The World Beautiful,' &c.), on 'The Life Radiant.'

Apr. 30.—MR. JAMES I. WEDGWOOD, on 'Auras, Halos, and the Occult Significance of Colours.'

May 14.—MISS E. KATHARINE BATES (author of 'Seen and Unseen'), on 'Psychic Faculties and Psychic Experiences.'

May 28.—MR. GEORGE P. YOUNG, President of the Spiritualists' National Union, on 'The Physical Phenomena of Mediumship in the Light of the Newer Chemistry.'

AN AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on April 9th, at three o'clock.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA the following meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.:—

SPECIAL NOTICE.

To meet the wishes of a number of Members and Associates who desire to have an opportunity to put questions to 'Moranibo,' the spirit control of Mrs. M. H. Wallis, arrangements have been made with that lady to hold a séance on

TUESDAY EVENING NEXT,

March 3rd, at 6.30. This meeting will be similar to the Friday afternoon 'Talks with a Spirit Control' (see the announcement below), and the conditions for attendance will be the same as at those gatherings.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, March 3rd, Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham) will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Mrs. Atkins on the 10th and 17th. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TRANCE ADDRESS.—On Wednesday next, March 4th, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Dudley F. Wright will speak on 'The Spiritual Origin and Development of Man.' Miss Violet Burton on the 11th. Admission 1s.* Members and Associates free. No tickets required.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—On Thursday next, March 5th, at 4.45 p.m., Mr. Frederic Thurstan, M.A., will conduct a class for Members and Associates for psychic culture and home development of mediumship.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, March 6th, at 3 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to the pheno-

mena and philosophy of Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and on 'the other side.' Admission 1s.*; Members and Associates free. Visitors should be prepared with written questions of *general interest* to submit to the control.

* MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing *one* friend to the *Wednesday and Friday* meetings without payment.

SPIRITUAL HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the spiritual healer, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., to afford Members and Associates and their friends an opportunity to avail themselves of his services in magnetic healing under spirit control. As Mr. Rex is unable to treat more than four patients on each occasion, appointments must be made in advance by letter, addressed to the Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fees, one treatment, 7s. 6d.; course of three, 15s.

A WELSH PSYCHIC.

Two correspondents in South Wales send testimony to the psychic powers of a prominent Spiritualist in that district, who, however, does not desire that his name or theirs should be mentioned. We will therefore refer to him as Mr. P., and give a summary of the narratives. Mr. D. writes:—

Going to a meeting one night, and stopping to speak to a friend, I was accosted by Mr. P., who asked if I had known a person named 'Dicky,' who passed away at the age of twenty-two, terribly emaciated from consumption. When I said that I had never known such a person, Mr. P. gave me this message as from the young man: 'Tell Maggie to show you my photo.' I then thought it might be the brother of a friend of mine, and asked for the full name or a nickname. Mr. P. said that the young man pointed to a photograph of a shop, which hung on the wall, and that if I could get the portrait he (Mr. P.) could recognise it among any number of others. When I asked my friend 'Maggie' if she had a photo of her brother, she brought one out, and I was surprised at the clearness and accuracy of Mr. P.'s description. On asking what name the young man was called by, I was told that he was known as 'Dicky the Shop.' On the following Sunday I showed this photo to Mr. P. among a number of others, and he picked it out without hesitation. At an interview with 'Maggie,' Mr. P. described accurately a pony and trap which 'Dicky' used to drive, giving well-marked peculiarities of both.

The other correspondent, Mr. R., gives further instances of precise details clairvoyantly seen or sensed by Mr. P., substantially as follows:—

While chatting with friends, one of whom was a complete sceptic, Mr. P., who was present, said that he would not give a description of our little girl, who had passed on two years before, because he had already done this, and had seen her photograph; but he would get something else from her. He then gave an astonishingly correct description of the burial-ground in which her remains had been laid, and of the path by which, as he said, she took him to her grave. This was not the way we used to go when visiting the spot, but was the one used on the occasion of the funeral. He also described the grave and the tombstone, which was unlike those used in this part of the country, and said that another person had been interred in the same grave, which was correct. He mentioned other features of the burial-ground, and described the minister who officiated at the funeral. Mr. P. had never been in that part of the country. I placed in Mr. P.'s hand a sealed envelope, and though a remark from my wife, who thought that it contained something else, led him off the track, Mr. P. correctly stated that there was in it a curl from the little one's head, and indicated the part of the head from which it had been cut.

On another occasion Mr. P. described a lady to my wife, giving minute particulars of her dress, but my wife did not recognise her. A few days later, on looking over an album which he had never before seen, Mr. P. pointed out the lady whom he had described to my wife; it was my mother, whom my wife had never seen. The description was correct in every detail, as could be seen from the photograph.

In the first and last of the incidents related above, the persons described were unknown to those to whom the descriptions were given, and in the last case the psychic had certainly never seen Mr. R.'s mother, who died many years before, while Mr. R. was quite young, and in another part of the country where Mr. P. had never been. In reference to the description of the road taken to reach the grave, Mr. R. writes: 'If that were thought-reading, then naturally he would have given us our usual route to the grave,' instead of the one followed by the funeral.

DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITUAL THINGS.

BY LILLIAN WHITING.

That 'spiritual things must be spiritually discerned' is one of the axiomatic truths. The senses recognise and record one order of facts; the perceptions of the spirit recognise and record another order of actualities with a testimony equally reliable, and even equally susceptible of proof, *on its own plane*. In all dealings with spiritual phenomena these two planes should be considered. Physical manifestations appeal to the senses. If a table defies the law of gravitation and rises in the air; if raps or sounds of any kind are heard, not produced within our range of physics; if hands or forms are seen, or felt—all these are of one range of phenomena and appeal to the senses. On the other hand, if messages are given whose quality reveals an individuality that is recognised; if statements are made, not at the time known to anyone present, but which are afterwards verified, and if a chain of events, consisting of links in both the ethereal and the physical, is experienced; if impressions, and messages received clairaudiently, are subsequently discovered to be conjoined with outer facts and occurrences—the two phases blending into one rational chain and sequence of events—this evidence appeals both to the senses and to those perceptions which recognise spiritual things, namely, things which, by their very nature, *can* only be spiritually discerned.

Something of this train of speculative thought drifted through my mind on hearing a noted 'psychical researcher' say that 'Italy had gone far ahead of any other country in psychic research.' The statement was made because, to the speaker, the physical manifestations through Eusapia Paladino seemed more remarkable than all the messages that have been given in England and in the United States, including the remarkable series of 'cross-correspondences' given through Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Piper, the test messages given through Mrs. Minnie M. Soule, of Boston, U.S.A., and countless messages and clairvoyant and clairaudient tests, equally evidential and convincing, which have been received by hosts of inquirers.

Now, without in any way denying the value of physical phenomena, is not the real truth the reverse of this? It is true that the most utter sceptic must be convinced that there are laws and forces which he has not grasped when he sees things occurring in defiance of the ordinary physical laws, but it seems to me that one might witness mere physical phenomena for a life-time without necessarily becoming convinced that they were produced by those who have passed from this life to the other. In this age especially, when ethereal energy permits of such wonderful results as wireless telegraphy, and many other impressive things that would seem incredible from the ordinary range of knowledge, the phenomena which afford proofs of the existence of a law superseding the law of gravitation, and of a law permitting a solid object to pass through a curtain and leave no trace, would not, of necessity, connect themselves with conscious intelligences on the ethereal side. Of course, when a message is spelled out by raps we begin to have evidence of the action of conscious intelligence, and enter upon the higher and more subtle appeal to the intelligence. In Eusapia Paladino's phenomena, however, there is little or nothing beyond a very remarkable order of physical marvels—possibly because the evidences of the presence and identity of incarnate intelligences have not been encouraged or sought.

In addition to the latter-day testimony of identity and intelligence through such mediumistic persons as Mrs. Verrall (who is a learned and distinguished lady—a Professor in Newnham College and the wife of a Professor of Cambridge University), of Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Soule, Mrs. Thompson, Alfred Vout Peters, and many others, both in America and England, it is useful to read the history of the movement backward through its recorded literature, to the work of Andrew Jackson Davis, to the times of Judge Edmonds and his group of friends in New York City, to the experiences of Professor Robert Hare, and to the time when the 'Rochester rappings' through the Fox sisters, in 1848, first startled the world; and

in all this range of literature one finds striking unanimity in the testimony to certain facts :—

(1) That physical phenomena were employed to arrest attention.

(2) That the attention once gained the phenomena took on a higher and more subtle range of appeal—from the senses to the spirit.

(3) That this more subtle appeal to the spirit—by which, of course, I mean the appeal to personal recognition, personal identity—has constantly continued, by evolutionary progression, to grow more cogent on the spiritual plane.

Bearing these facts in mind, I would ask : Can we fail to consider the appeal to the spirit—to the mind, the perceptions—as of a higher order than the appeal to the senses ? Is it not a very great evolutionary advance from the physical phenomena produced by Eusapia Paladino to the subtle and remarkable ‘cross-correspondence’ evidently (I use the word ‘evidently’ advisedly) given by Frederic Myers through Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Piper ? And beyond this—while the prominence of Mr. Myers, the high scholarly attainments of Mrs. Verrall, and the famous psychic gift of Mrs. Piper, make this instance a striking one to offer, yet, as a matter of truth, for more than half a century messages more coherent, more sustained, more direct in their proof, more related to the actualities of life, have been received by hundreds of more or less well-known people through more or less unknown mediums. A large proportion of the absolutely convincing testimony to the intercourse between the inhabitants of the ethereal and the physical worlds is so subtle, so entirely a matter of the relations of spirit, by the telepathic methods of communication, that it is almost impossible to record it clearly, while physical phenomena are, by their very nature, easily described ; but physical phenomena alone would never prove those subtle, potent relations of spirit to spirit which transcend the change of condition called death.

The public library at Boston has a department labelled ‘Spiritualism,’ and another for ‘Psychical Research,’ in which practically the entire literature of both movements is assembled, and thus the records of all the phases in different countries and languages are accessible there to the reader. The literature of the theosophical movement is equally ample in its (practically) complete representation. There are the records, and he who will may read. I think that no one could go through this large and impressive collection of testimony, ranging over nearly sixty years, without feeling that the physical phenomena are a rudimentary stage designed to arrest public attention, while the appeal of intelligence to intelligence, mind to mind, spirit to spirit, is the higher, finer, and more significant development, even as conversation and correspondence are higher phases of human intercourse than signs and gestures. Had the movement opened, however, with such subtle phases as telepathy, impressions, clairaudience, and clairvoyance, it would have made little or no appeal to the general public, and anyone who claimed that he had received messages from ‘the dead’ (as we call them) in any of those ways, would simply have been pronounced more or less crazy, as was the case with Swedenborg, Joan of Arc, and George Fox. Hence physical phenomena, although rudimentary, had their place—perhaps they still have their place—but to lay stress on them and exclude the more mental and spiritual modes of intercourse, is something like ignoring the work of contemporary astronomers and citing the theories of Ptolemy.

In Rome—in all Italy—the tendency is largely that of emphasising physical phenomena and, it seems to me, to go backward for half a century rather than to merit the recognition of to-day. There might be (I do not believe that there *are*, but there *might be*) a thousand explanations of the phenomena of Eusapia wholly outside the acting of any conscious incarnate intelligence, but when *messages* are received that involve a recognised individuality—that involve the subtle social relations of friendship or acquaintance—are not these (the spiritual things which are spiritually perceived) immensely more valuable than the merely physical phenomena ?

MR. GEORGE R. SIMS AND SPIRITUALISM.

Mr. George R. Sims, in his ‘Mustard and Cress’ article in ‘The Referee’ of Sunday last, referred to Sir Oliver Lodge’s expressed opinion ‘that communication with the dead is possible,’ and said :—

But to believe that the living can communicate with the dead, ordinary mortals would have to alter their idea of the hereafter very considerably. The common theory is that after death we become, either directly or after certain stages of purification, angels. Spirits would be, perhaps, the better word, but the angel is the form that human imagination, which must give shape to its ideas, gives to the immortal soul. The highest conception of spirit life is that it is a life purged completely from all that appertains to earth, and therefore there would be no earthly memories.

If this be, as Mr. Sims says, ‘the creed of the crowd,’ it is quite time that ordinary mortals altered their ideas very considerably ; for spirit life without any earthly memories would not be continued existence at all. The spirits would practically be newly created beings, having no knowledge of their past or of relationship to the people upon this earth. Human survival means the going on of all that we are, and have acquired, as conscious intelligences ; anything short of this means the destruction of individuality and the limitation of consciousness of identity to this earthly state of existence.

Mr. Sims objects to Spiritualism because, as he says :—

If we can communicate with the dead, then the dead must remain in touch with earthly things. That to many of us would add a new terror to death. There could be no eternal peace if the dead carried with them the family anxieties that were theirs on earth. On earth the loving mother can soothe and tend her ailing child. But the dead mother with a knowledge of her child’s sufferings would have her distress increased by her inability to aid. The Christian belief that in Heaven there shall be no more tears is not reconcilable with the theory that in Heaven the departed retain their memory of their loved ones on earth and look down upon them.

We will let the Rev. Gilbert Sadler answer Mr. Sims. He said, when preaching at Wimbledon recently, according to a report in the ‘British Congregationalist’ of February 13th :

We had to face to-day an accumulated amount of evidence which seemed to suggest that there were certain laws and conditions by which those who had died were able to return to this world and speak to the living. Surely this belief was most reasonable. Did it not seem unreasonable that there should be no law by which those who died could help their friends remaining here ? Mr. Sadler, having supposed that a good mother had left her loved children behind, asked, would God deny her any possibility of communication with her lonely little ones, deny her means of helping those who were all in all to her ? There were many witnesses to the fact that such communication and help were possible. Spiritualism in its highest forms believed there were methods by which those in the unseen world did help and communicate with those below.

According to Mr. Sims the simplest faith of all—

is the faith that is charity for others, hope for ourselves, and the making of the world we are in as happy as we can by our individual efforts. What we were before we do not know. What we shall be hereafter we do not know. But we do know what we are now, and if we concentrate our thoughts and our efforts on making our existence as useful as we can, as honest as we can, and as noble as we can, we shall not be far wrong, whatever our future condition is ordained to be.

With this we heartily agree, but, we would suggest that this ‘faith’ would be strengthened, and would become more vital and effective, if men added to it the knowledge which Spiritualism gives of the fact of survival after bodily death, and that all efforts at noble living in this world will directly influence the spirit and determine its status ‘over there’ ; for ‘whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.’

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—As will be seen by the ‘Special Notice’ in the London Spiritualist Alliance announcements on page 98, arrangements have been made for an *evening* meeting on *Tuesday next*, at 6.30, to afford those Members and Associates who are unable to attend the usual Friday afternoon gatherings an opportunity of putting questions to ‘Morambo,’ the spirit control of Mrs. M. H. Wallis. Visitors will be admitted on payment of 1s., Members and Associates free.

IS SPIRIT COMMUNION FORBIDDEN ?

A writer in the New Zealand 'Message of Life,' replying to a gentleman who asserted that 'God has withheld inspiration since the days of the apostles,' says :—

This is a statement which has no foundation, and therefore I reject it. Have you ever seen a person in a deep trance, quite unconscious of everything, yet speaking fluently upon many subjects of interest? It would surprise you to see a lady used by some unseen influence, speaking with the voice of a man, and teaching the highest truth. Inspiration!—why, I have the pleasure of listening to the most uplifting teaching twice a week, given by a lady when entranced, and I have heard much to comfort and strengthen me from other mediums. The spirits of those who have advanced on the 'other side,' as we call it, say it is their mission to come to humanity to lead us up to the highest.

In olden times the Israelites said it was the Lord who spoke through the prophets. The individuality of the medium when in a trance is set aside and he or she becomes quite another person. Turn up 1 Sam. x. 6: 'And thou shalt prophesy with them, and (mark the words) shalt be turned into another man.' This was an unseen influence, which was to overcome Saul's individuality and speak through him. Perhaps you say this has nothing to do with Spiritualism. You are in error; for the prophets of old were 'forth-speakers,' or mediums who spake as the spirits 'gave them utterance.' In Num. xi. 25, we read: 'And it came to pass, when the spirit rested upon them they prophesied.' Is this plain enough for you? Here was an outside influence of a spirit, and the person influenced prophesied. In Job iv. 15, 16, we read these words, spoken by Eliphaz: 'A spirit before my face . . . it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof.' We are next told that the spirit spoke. Paul said that he who spoke in an unknown tongue 'speaketh not unto men, but unto God.' This is clear. And to prevent confusion, when the early believers met, they were to speak one at a time, and the spirits of those who prophesied (the prophets) were to be subject to the prophets (1 Cor. xiv. 31, 32). This does away completely with the argument that it was the Holy Spirit, or God directly manifesting through the prophetic mediums.

The Church is always talking about spirit communion being forbidden, but the foregoing passages show that God's way of speaking to man was through the agency of angels or messenger spirits (Acts vii. 53) as when St. John, in Revelation, says that the spirit who spoke to him said: 'The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel' to him, and when he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel he said, 'See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets—worship God.'

The writer of this letter makes a good point, which is too frequently overlooked, especially by those who entertain the idea that women should not be allowed to preach in churches. He says :—

Women were used to convey messages to mankind. Deborah was a prophetess and judged Israel (Num. iv. 4). 'The Lord' spoke through Huldah, the prophetess, when Hilkiah the priest and others 'communed with her' (2 Kings xxii. 14). I want to show you in passing that women were chosen instruments in past days, just as they are now, and the position of teacher was not monopolised by an order called 'the clergy,' as is the case now. In the New Testament we are told that Anna, 'a prophetess,' spoke and gave thanks to God upon the birth of the child Jesus (Luke ii. 36). Philip, the evangelist, had 'four daughters who did prophesy' (Acts xxi. 9). Show me the Church that exists to-day in which women are allowed to prophesy, or speak under inspiration!

Modern Spiritualism had its origin with the Fox sisters, and many of the best mediums and inspired speakers, who have rendered devoted service to the cause of truth and humanity, have been women.

That the primitive Christians were Spiritualists and employed their 'spiritual gifts,' much as modern mediums do, is abundantly clear to unprejudiced persons who are familiar with modern mediumship, and this is well brought out by the writer, who says :—

The early Church rejoiced in spiritual gifts. They broke forth at Pentecost, and the strangers who were gathered together from different countries were confounded when they heard the unlettered disciples speaking in different tongues. Read the account in Acts ii. The Christian dispensation rests upon the return of Christ to his disciples after his crucifixion.

'I will not leave you comfortless,' he told them, 'I will come again.' He spoke to them of the many mansions in the Father's kingdom, and said 'I go to prepare a place for you, . . . and I will come again (when their time to pass over had arrived) and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' Can we doubt that he met them one by one as they passed within the veil? The Christian religion was ushered in by the spirit of Jesus appearing to the disciples in bodily form—a materialised form—and he promised that they should be 'endowed with power from on high.' At Pentecost this promise was fulfilled, and the gifts of the spirit were never withdrawn. Prophecy was one of the richest gifts enjoyed by the early Christians. We read of Agabus, a prophet, foretelling Paul's arrest (Acts xxi. 11). There were in the Church of Antioch 'certain prophets and teachers' (Acts xiii. 1). 'Judas and Silas, being prophets themselves, exhorted the brethren' (Acts xv. 32). These were the two brethren who were sent by the apostles to deliver the message to the early Christians that the only commands binding were these: 'That ye abstain from meat offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication, from which, if ye keep yourselves ye shall do well' (Acts xv.). In the face of these commands, and the fact that spirits continually spoke through those called prophets, it is certain that the cruel edict of Moses that consigned witches to death was never carried out. King Saul knew where to find the woman of Endor, when he wanted the spirit of Samuel.

Paul wrote, 'Despise not spiritual gifts: seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church.' Does the Church of to-day understand these injunctions? Read 1 Cor. xii. concerning spiritual gifts, and say whether the teachings therein contained have any weight. I leave you, if you have any conscience—any desire to walk in the narrow path of obedience, to judge, firstly, yourself; secondly, the condition of the Church. And may I advise you to open your mind towards further truth? Those who realise the nearness of the spirit world, the power and beauty of its teachings, and the comfort it gives to every mourner, are called Spiritualists. If you are a truth-seeker try and join with a few earnest investigators and you will soon find a rich mine of truth in listening to the teachings given through the organism of a spiritually-minded medium.

JOHN STUART MILL A SPIRITUALIST.

From the 'Revue Chrétienne' the 'Review of Reviews' takes some important details furnished by Pastor Rey, of Avignon, regarding the belief in immortality and spirit influence which was held by John Stuart Mill during the last years of his life, which were passed in that city. Starting as he did from absolute unbelief, we are told, Mill's 'rupture with Atheism was a terrible crisis. Then came a vein of mysticism into his life.' He attended Unitarian services, and met Mrs. Taylor, who became his wife. After only seven and a half years of married life, Mrs. Mill died, and her husband bought a house near the cemetery in which her remains were laid. But, continues Pastor Rey :—

He soon repaired the broken thread in his life, and continued to work in the company of her who was only absent in the flesh. He surrounded himself with her mystic presence, he continued to have intimate relations with the being who to him was more alive than ever, he listened to her inspiration, and desired everyone to remember that everything which he wrote after her death was the product, not of one mind and conscience, but of three—namely Mill, his wife, and his step-daughter. Surely this was, consciously or unconsciously, a practical affirmation of immortality.

Yes, and of more than the fact of immortality: of the reality of the power of spirit consciousness to impress and inspire those still on earth; the distinctive feature of Spiritualism in its practical bearings as teaching the continuity not only of life and consciousness, but of the interest and influence of departed loved ones.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: 'I recently went into three shops in the West End of London in one afternoon to make some purchases, and I had the temerity to ask the young man serving me at each place if he had ever heard of Spiritualism. One told me he had been a Spiritualist for years and was a member of a spiritual church, another told me he had recently joined a society and was becoming a "medium" himself, while the other said that he "believed in it," but had not yet taken it up! Surely this gives an indication of how Spiritualism is spreading in London.'

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SPIRITUAL INTIMATIONS.

It is one of the consolations of life, if one goes on long enough, to see how a struggling light here and there shines out with added splendour instead of fainting into the common gloom. Of one such instance we have been reminded by the appearance of a cheap reprint of Dr. Martineau's 'Endeavours after the Christian Life,' a book whose charm and wisdom and spiritual illumination have won the admiration, and more than the admiration, of the Christian world.

Here, in these twenty-two thoughtful and beautiful Discourses, we range over nearly the whole of 'the green pastures' and by the whole of 'the still waters' of the Christian Life, with such subjects as 'The Spirit of Life in Jesus Christ,' 'The Besetting God,' 'Eden and Gethsemane,' 'Religion on False Pretences,' 'Mammon-worship,' 'The Contentment of Sorrow,' 'Silence and Meditation,' 'Christ and the Little Child.' But, of course, our own particular interest centres in the two Discourses on 'Immortality' and 'Nothing Human ever dies'; Discourses which we commend to the 'London Spiritualist Alliance' for separate publication.

There is, indeed, a note of pensiveness in these Discourses, and very little of rhapsody, but the thought is calm and strong; and the confidence of the hope that goes before seems all the firmer because of the pathos of the look behind: and much of all that is said is expressed in the unspeakably wise and touching saying: 'The only resource for a man without faith, is to be also without love.' What latent horror is in that word 'resource' as used in this terrible sentence! If death ends all, love may be indeed only a tragic gift, and he may be best off who is without it: he will, at all events, be spared the agony of heart-breaking loss.

But love has its vast alleviations. It half compels belief in love's enduringness, and doubt 'vanishes in proportion as the affections are deeply moved': and surely there is an argument for the validity of love's longing in the fact that it is love which longs. Dr. Martineau makes much of the argument based upon the undoubted fact that the longing for persistent life is found in connection with the instincts and emotions of humankind. If the celestial

hope be a delusion, he says, it is plain *who* are the mistaken:—

Not the mean and grovelling souls, who never reached to so great a thought; not the drowsy and easy natures, who are content with the sleep of sense through life, and the sleep of darkness ever after; not the selfish and pinched of conscience, of small thought and smaller love; no, these in such cases are right, and the universe *is* on their miserable scale. The deceived are the great and holy, whom all men, aye, these very insignificants themselves, revere; the men who have lived for something better than their happiness, and spent themselves in the race, or fallen at the altar of human good—Paul, with his mighty and conquering courage; yes, Christ himself, who vainly sobbed his spirit to rest on his Father's imaginary love, and without result commended his soul to the Being whom he fancied himself to reveal. The self-sacrifice of Calvary was but a tragic and barren mistake; for heaven disowns the godlike prophet of Nazareth, and takes part with those who scoffed at him and would have him die; and is insensible to the divine fitness which even men have felt, when they either recorded the supposed fact, or invented the beautiful fiction, of Christ's ascension. Whom are we to revere, and what can we believe, if the inspirations of the highest of created natures are but cunningly devised fables?

Dr. Martineau is fond of the argument which grows out of the spiritual sense of communion between God and the creatures He has taught to long for Him and love Him. It is an argument which many of our finest minds have valued. The very order and harmony of the Universe, spiritually discerned, seem to insist upon the rooting of mortal man in the deathlessness of God: and Martineau so felt the force of this that, in one powerful passage, he goes so far as to say that if the physical dissolution of the body involves the annihilation of the spirit, by the same rule the physical vanishing of the worlds (which is quite possible) would mean the death of God.

The argument from thought and the continuity of thought is also a favourite one with him. He maintains that it is impossible to form a steady conception of thought, except as originating behind and beyond everything that can be regarded as bodily structure, and certainly different from it. Nor is it easier to imagine ideas and feelings to be the result of organisation; to imagine, for instance, that the juxtaposition of a number of particles makes a hope, and that an aggregation of subtle textures forms veneration. 'The corporeal frame is but the mechanism for making thoughts and affections apparent, the signal-house with which God has covered us, the electric telegraph by which quickest intimation flies abroad of the spiritual force within us. The instrument may be broken, the dial-plate effaced: and, though the hidden artist can make no more signs, he may be rich as ever in the things to be signified.'

The Discourse on 'Nothing Human ever dies' presents the preacher in his serenest mood as calm philosopher rather than as soaring rhapsodist. He seems to sit above all the past and passing shows of things, with deliberate but concentrated gaze, to note their meaning and their goal: and he finds both in the thought of a divine purpose with its hidden economies and its far-reaching plans. Men vanish, but their contributions of thought and work are harvested. The social drama is being continuously played out with its large developments, though families and nations perish. All great and impressive makers of history remain, through their deeds, in the vast treasure-store, though they themselves pass away. Nothing is lost.

Can we imagine then such wastefulness on the part of the Mighty Master of all creation as that He should let perish His loftiest products, the servants and instruments by whom He has worked? 'That we grieve for their departure, and invoke their names, is proof that they are performing such blessed office still.'

IMMORTALITY; HISTORICALLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY CONSIDERED.

BY THE REV. GERTRUD VON PETZOLD, M.A.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, February 20th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, the Rev. J. Page Hopps in the chair.

MISS VON PETZOLD said : The idea of immortality is—it is not too much to say—as old as humanity. It is a universal heritage of the human race. It is true that missionaries and travellers have sometimes asserted that they have found races which were devoid of this idea, but, when the life of these races came to be studied more closely, it was generally found that they did believe in some sort of life after death, though the crude and imperfect way in which they would express it might well lead to misconceptions.

In studying the historic development of the doctrine of immortality it will be convenient to divide it into three parts :—

1. The idea of immortality among the lower races.
2. Among the higher races.
3. In Judaism and Christianity.

We will first deal with the lower races. There we find the belief in a future life expressed in two different theories. One is the theory of the transmigration of souls ; the other is the theory of the independent life of the soul after death.

The idea of transmigration, or reincarnation of human souls in other human bodies and animals, was common to the primitive races of America, Africa and Australia. North American Indians would bury their dead children by the wayside, so that their souls might pass into their mothers going by and be born again. The Nulka Indians explained the phenomenon of other distant tribes speaking the same language as they by the supposition that the spirits of their own dead had passed into these strangers. West African negroes have committed suicide when in distant slavery, believing that their souls would be reincarnated in their own land. The dark aborigines of Australia when first confronted with white men were so overwhelmed by their pale, ghostly appearance that they decided that these white people must be the spirits of their dead come back to life.

There is a story of Sir George Grey once being hugged and wept over by an old woman who firmly believed that she recognised in him a dead son who had returned to her. It is well known, of course, that some races believed that human souls would transmigrate also into the bodies of animals, and this form of belief is common even to the higher races, such as the Egyptians and the East Indians. Of these I will speak later. So much for the transmigration theory among the lower races.

I will now consider the belief in the independent life of a soul after death, as it was held amongst them—the belief in the return of departed spirits. Dr. Johnson once said regarding it : ‘ All argument is against it, but all belief is for it.’ Professor Tyler says : ‘ The doctrine that ghost-souls of the dead hover among the living is indeed rooted in the lowest level of savage culture, extends through barbaric life almost without a break, and survives largely and deeply in the midst of civilisation.’ It is generally believed that the souls of the departed revisit the scenes of their earthly life and haunt their burial places. Often people would be afraid of their influence. The Hottentots would abandon the house of a dead man to decay. The Greenlanders would carry a dead man through the window so that his spirit should not return by the door. Some tribes would break a hole through the house wall, through which they would carry the coffin. Various causes may keep the soul from its rest, and one of these was the omission of the proper funeral rites on the part of the relatives left behind. This belief was most firmly rooted even in classic antiquity. It was a fatal charge that was brought against the Athenian generals when they were accused of

having deserted their dead after the sea fight of Arginousai. Antigone, in the great drama of Sophocles, risks her very life in order to bury her slain brother.

Among many Asiatic and African tribes it was customary to bring offerings of food and drink to the graveside. In Madagascar there was a little upper chamber in the King’s mausoleum furnished with table and chairs, and regularly provided with wine and water, of which the spirits of the late king and his father were expected to partake. The Kal tribes of Chota Nagpur used to perform all manner of pathetic funeral rites. Professor Tyler, in his ‘ Primitive Culture,’ gives us a minute description of these. He says :—

When a Munda (that is, evidently, a chief or some person of consequence) has been burned on the funeral pile, collected morsels of his bones are carried in procession with a solemn, ghostly, sliding step, keeping time to the deep-sounding drum, and when the old woman who carries the bones on her bamboo tray lowers it from time to time, then girls who carry pitchers and brass vessels mournfully reverse them to show that they are empty. Thus the remains are taken to visit every house in the village, and every dwelling of a friend or relative for miles, and the inmates come out to mourn and praise the goodness of the departed. The bones are carried to all the dead man’s favourite haunts, to the fields he cultivated, to the grove he planted, to the threshing floor where he worked, to the village dance room where he made merry. At last they are taken to the grove and buried in an earthen vase upon a store of food, covered with one of those huge stone slabs which European visitors wonder at in the districts of the aborigines of India.

Let me quote to you a pathetic dirge that would be sung on occasions like these. It runs thus :—

We never scolded you, never wronged you ;
Come to us back !

We ever loved and cherished you, and have lived long together,
Under the same roof ;
Desert it not now !

The rainy nights and the cold blowing days are coming on ;
Do not wander here ;
Do not stand by the burnt ashes,
Come to us again !

You cannot find shelter when the rain comes on,
The soul will not shield you from the cold, bitter wind,
Come to your home !

It is swept for you : and we are there who loved you ever,
And there is rice fresh for you and water ;
Come home, come home, come to us again !

The ancient custom of providing food for the departed survived even into Christian times. It was not uncommon amongst the early Christians to have a feast at the tomb of a martyr, though their own leaders upbraided them for it. One writer tells them that they have simply turned the heathen rites into Christian ceremonies. ‘ Their sacrifices,’ he says, ‘ ye have turned into love feasts, their idols into martyrs whom with like vows ye worship. Ye appease the shades of the dead with wine and meals, ye celebrate the Gentiles’ solemn days with them, such as calends and solstices,’ and so on.

Even as far back as the seventeenth century we read that after the death of a French King, during the forty days before the funeral when his wax effigy lay in state, Court ceremonial prescribed that a seat was to be laid for him as usual, and all the dishes were placed before his armchair as if he were still there in person. Even in the present day the celebration of All Souls’ Day in some European countries still shows clear traces of a survival of primitive rites. In Italy the day is spent in feasting in honour of the dead and the children play with toy skeletons of sugar and paste. In Brittany crowds of people stream into the churchyard on the evening of All Souls’ Day and pour libations of water and milk into the hollow of the tombstone. Of course, it is not easy to say in what manner the people who practised these rites considered that the spirits of the departed partook of the food offered to them. No doubt, in the very earliest times, they would believe that the dead came back in bodily shape afterwards to consume the food. A little later they thought it was merely the savour of the food they enjoyed. And later still the rites would be practised for a purely symbolical significance.

I think I have said enough to show you how firmly rooted

the idea of a life after death—whether in a crudely materialistic or in a more refined spiritualistic form—has been in the minds of even the most primitive races. Indeed, we need not have any hesitation in affirming that the belief in a life after death has been the universal heritage of the human race. But this belief becomes infinitely more interesting when we begin to trace its development in the higher races, such as the Hindus, the Egyptians, the Persians, and the Greeks. Some of these people, as you know, have had a wonderful philosophy and a civilisation which goes back thousands of years before the Christian era.

Let us begin with the Hindus. Their oldest religious writings which have come down to us are the Rîg Veda, which are made up of over a thousand hymns, these hymns ranging in time of composition over hundreds of years. In them we find the belief in immortality clearly established. The ancient Hindu believed that there was a life after death which could be obtained by every mortal by conforming with certain conditions. These conditions, it is true, were of a more or less non-ethical character, such as drinking the Soma drink, offering sacrifice, and providing liberally for the priests' maintenance. The latter Vedic hymns show strongly pantheistic tendencies. But even in them there is a distinct conception of a society of the dead, which is ruled by King Yama, who has power to grant 'long life among the dead.' It is to be noticed that in the Vedic hymns there is as yet no allusion to the later doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Nor is it mentioned in the great prose work, 'The Brahmanas.' These develop very strongly the sacerdotal element; the power of the priest and the efficacy of sacrifice. Only he who has duly performed the rites of sacrifice will attain immortal life. 'He who sacrifices with a burnt offering arrives by Agni as the door to Brahma; and having so arrived he attains to a union with Brahma and abides in the same sphere with him.'

However, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls became duly developed in the later Indian philosophy. It is clearly stated in the Upanishads and the Laws of Manu. In the Upanishads we have still a complete union with Brahma aimed at as the chief goal of existence. Brahma is the only Reality, the one Being, the world-soul, the only soul, and individual existence is a semblance or an evil. The soul of man is eternal and immortal because it is part of the great World-Soul into which it must finally be re-absorbed.

A later development of Indian thought, we all know, was the Buddhistic system, a religion without a God. It carries the idea of transmigration to an extreme. The soul must pass through endless incarnations before it can reach the final goal which is Nirvana, a state of blessedness when man shall be completely freed from desire. The various transmigrations are regulated according to the immutable law of Karma, which draws the sum of a man's character according to the acts of his life. The sum and substance of Buddhism, therefore, is not a personal but an impersonal life after death—a re-absorption into the Divine.

Very interesting also are the ideas of Egypt in relation to the doctrine of immortality. These ideas are laid down in that very ancient book, 'The Book of the Dead.' Some of its MSS. date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries before the Christian era, but extracts from it are found in tablets and monuments a good deal earlier. The Egyptian doctrine of immortality was closely bound up with the preservation of the human body, for which reason the Egyptians built those enormous palatial residences for their great dead, which are to the present day the wonder of the civilised world. According to the Egyptian the human being consisted of body and soul. But the soul was not immaterial; it consisted of various parts, which after death would all lead a separate existence. These were the heart, the Ba which needed food and drink; the Sahu, or form of the dead; the Khem, intelligent part; and the shadow. More important than these were the Kâ, or Double, which gods and men possessed, and the Osiris, which corresponds to the mummy, but is immortal. It is not quite easy to define quite accurately the various functions of this plural soul. Suffice it to say that the life after death

according to the Egyptian was not much better or more spiritual than this life. Yet he had a very clear conception of the judgment that took place at the entrance of the future life. The 'Book of the Dead' describes such a scene to us. The goddess Maat, representing justice, truth, and love, is pictured as the judge. There are scales in one of which the man's heart is placed and in the other the heart of the goddess. Horus attends to the index; Thoth takes the record. Above the balance we see forty-two assessors, who have to do with the forty-two great forms of sin. If the departed spirit is acquitted he receives back his former human faculties and he begins a new life, which, however, is often beset with dangers. This vivid idea of the judgment to come and of the future life had a high ethical influence on Egyptian life. That is clearly shown by some beautiful prayers which have been preserved to us.

Grant that I arrive at the country of eternity and the regions of the justified, that I be re-united to the fair and wise spirits of Kerner, and that I appear with them to contemplate Thy beauties in the morning of every day.

Or take a prayer like the following:—

O Thou who beamest in the top of heaven, grant me to arrive at the highest point in the sky for Eternity, through the dwelling of Thy favourites, to be united with those august and perfect ones in the nether world, to go out with them to see Thy splendours when Thou risest.

The Greek historian, Herodotus, states that some Greek philosophers—evidently meaning Pythagoras and his school—borrowed the doctrine of transmigration from the Egyptians. This has for a long time been accepted as historical, but we know better now. The 'Book of the Dead' speaks of certain metamorphoses through which the good dead have to pass, but they do this for the sole reason of protection against attacks from evil spirits. Thus it mentions transformations into a golden hawk, a phoenix, a swallow, a snake, a crocodile—all these transformations are merely protective. There is no trace of expiatory or purgatorial transmigrations such as we find in Buddhism.

(To be continued.)

MR. ALFRED V. PETERS IN HOLLAND.

Holland has again had the benefit of a visit from Mr. Peters. I call it a benefit because few have the same power of showing the spirit world as a near reality, describing its inhabitants so as to be recognised, giving particulars of their former earth-life, and bringing kind messages of love and friendship, thus pouring consolation into the hearts of the bereaved ones. I was privileged to be his interpreter at successful sêances at Amsterdam and at Utrecht, and it was wonderful how accurate he was in his assertions. That this should have been guesswork is utterly impossible. When the spirit people he described were not immediately recognised he gave more and more particulars, until at last no doubt remained as to the personality he saw. Two incidents, which I will relate, were very convincing.

When psychometrising a locket, it appeared that two persons were connected with it. One of these, whom he described, was recognised immediately. Then he said he saw another woman, aged about thirty years, with light brown hair, turning golden when the sun shone on it. As this seemed insufficient for recognition, he gave more particulars and a name, 'Elizabeth,' saying that she must have been a good friend of the owner's wife, and that she died in child-bed. At last he said he was not sure that this woman had anything to do with the locket, and as soon as I had translated this, the owner of the locket said now it was all right, name and particulars given being perfectly correct. He had been thinking of another person connected with the locket, whom the description did not suit at all. It seems to me this must be accepted as a proof that Mr. Peters actually sees the forms he describes; if it had been telepathy he would, of course, have seen the person of whom the owner of the locket was thinking.

Another incident that struck me was this: When the

Amsterdam séance had come to a close and people were leaving the room, Mr. Peters suddenly rushed forward to a man, took his hand, stroked it with his left hand, and said: 'I don't know why, but I am forced to do this, and to say, "Boy, my boy, good-bye, good-bye!"' which he repeated several times. The gentleman was highly struck by this seemingly simple performance, and informed us that at a séance at Apeldoorn he had been told that he must attend a séance with Mr. Peters, through whom his father would try to manifest. The way in which Mr. Peters had taken his hand and stroked it, and the words uttered, were exactly the manner in which his father, when alive and in the flesh, used to take leave of him. Was not this a perfect test?

Indeed, Mr. Peters' visit to Holland has been a blessing to many of my compatriots, to whom he brought the certainty of the continued life after death, and of the continued interest of those who have passed over in the welfare and happiness of the loved ones they left behind.

H. N. DE FREMERY.

Bussum.

A YEAR OF 'NEW THEOLOGY.'

The issue of the 'Christian Commonwealth' for February 19th contains a portrait of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, with an article and interview bearing on the recent developments of his work, by Mr. Albert Dawson, the Editor of the paper. Mr. Dawson says that, when he first heard Mr. Campbell preach, he was inclined to reject all creeds and dogmas, holding only to a few fundamentals, such as 'the existence of God, the orderliness of the universe, and the divine direction of human affairs.' When Mr. Campbell, early in his City Temple ministry, uttered such sentences as, 'There is no dividing line between humanity and deity,' it became evident that a storm was brewing, and by January of last year, Mr. Dawson says, 'we had reached the parting of the ways,' and, though warned against committing his paper to a policy of theological reconstruction, he decided to follow, though quite independently, the line of his sympathies and convictions. The result is thus summed up by Mr. Dawson:—

What has astonished me supremely is the discovery of the widespread and intense yearning for the wider Gospel that is now being proclaimed, and that there are so many people in a state of preparedness for its reception. No doubt we are reaping the harvest of the seed sown by pioneers of thought during past generations. It is evident that we are only at the beginning of things. Our uppermost feelings are those of wonder and gratitude. As Mr. Campbell points out, we are witnessing a world-wide revival of spiritual religion.

In the interview with Mr. Campbell, the preacher is represented as almost impassive under what to a man of less confidence in the truth of his mission would have been a year of storm and stress. He has done his work, he says, without any sense of strain. He was prepared for the outburst over the 'New Theology,' but he was amazed at its force and bitterness. His own summary of the results is as follows:—

My personal impression is that liberal Christianity has gained enormously. Many people who felt alienated from the churches are beginning to claim their place and assert themselves in the religious life of the nation. The younger men who accept the broader outlook are spiritually minded and full of moral passion. This movement is far more than an intellectual movement: it is a moral and spiritual awakening, whose effects are only beginning to be felt, and whose greatest achievements are yet to come. There is probably no denomination which is unaffected by the wider theological outlook and its spiritual promise. It is the same movement everywhere. Roman Catholic Modernism is the same spirit working under different conditions.

As regards the attitude of the City Temple congregation, Mr. Campbell does not suppose that he has brought all its members over to his way of thinking, but hopes that he has helped them to think for themselves; and this, perhaps, is the greatest service that a preacher or teacher can render to his hearers.

THE CARE OF THE BODY.

Though Spiritualists are mainly concerned with the powers and development of the spiritual nature, they regard the body as the temporary means of manifestation of the spirit, and as the necessary instrument for the accomplishment of work and duty on the plane of mortal existence. Exaggerated views of the importance or otherwise of the body have led people to self-indulgence, to over-anxiety as to their physical well-being, or to ascetic mortification of the body; but the Spiritualist doctrine teaches us to use the body wisely and carefully so as to keep it, as any other material instrument should be kept, always in a fit condition for the service it has to perform.

A similar view is taken, on the whole, by those distinguished persons of advanced years who have, at Mr. Stead's invitation, contributed to a 'symposium' in the 'Review of Reviews,' for February, on 'What to Eat, Drink, and Avoid.'

Miss Ellen Terry emphasises the importance of regularity in the matter of meals, and Mr. G. B. Shaw points out that modern customs in eating are becoming 'horribly monotonous,' adding that 'dinner and lunch are practically two dinners, and breakfast is rapidly becoming a third dinner,' on account of the growing tendency to eat meat at every meal. Sir Henry Roscoe, though 'not a believer in vegetarianism,' is yet 'careful about the butcher's bill.' The Rev. John Clifford finds it wise 'to reduce the quantity of meat and increase that of fruit and vegetables,' while keeping 'as strict a watch as possible on the amount.' Mr. Frederic Harrison eats 'very sparingly, especially of meat'; most people, he truly says, 'over-eat, from habit rather than gluttony.'

Another testimony to the same effect is contained in a 'Daily News' interview with Miss Genevieve Ward, who will be seventy in March, and yet is as active and vigorous as a girl. She practises physical exercises for half an hour every morning, and finds this 'a sovereign cure for mental as well as physical depression.' She attaches great importance to the question of diet, eats sparingly of anything, especially of meat, and never drinks alcohol in any form. We might sum up the general lesson of the experiences given by saying: Make moderation and regularity your rule of life, avoiding stimulants and narcotics, and banish all fear or worry as to the results.

LEAMINGTON Y.M.C.A. AND 'SPIRITISM.'

We meet with unexpected evidences from time to time that religious prejudice and intolerance have not yet disappeared, in spite of the growth of a more truly religious spirit of liberality and kindness. A striking instance of the survival of the old narrow and bigoted view of Christianity has just been brought to our notice, which, we think, deserves a place in our pillory. It appears that, although it is forty-five years since Archdeacon Colley first became a subscriber to the funds of the Leamington branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, he recently received a letter from the president and honorary corresponding secretary of that body which, we hope, is unique, even as a valentine. It was as follows:—

'43, Parade,
'Leamington Spa.
'February 13th, 1908.

'DEAR SIR, - The General Committee of the Leamington branch of the Young Men's Christian Association have asked us, as president and corresponding secretary of the branch, to convey to you their request that you will kindly discontinue subscribing to the Association, and so cease your connection with it.

'They are impelled to this action *solely* by the stand you take as an active advocate of Spiritism. They do not for one moment mean to reflect on your character; but they wish to dissociate themselves from any suspicion of lightly regarding the spread of Spiritism in this town and elsewhere, for they regard it as entirely contrary to God's Word, and as a matter against which it is necessary in the fear of God to protest. They also believe that it has a most hurtful effect on the peace and faith of many. They feel, too, that their

position and reputation as that of the Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association will be injuriously affected by the appearance in their published subscription list of your name as one of their supporters, and they fear that thereby other subscribers may be led to withdraw their pecuniary support.

'In fact, one subscriber has already declined to continue subscribing on that account.

'It is—we beg you to believe us—with great pain that the Committee have felt themselves compelled to take this course; but we trust that you will fully understand their position.—We are, dear sir, yours faithfully,

'J. W. REID, President.

'G. G. OSBORN, Hon. Corr. Sec.

'The Ven. Archdeacon Colley,
'Stockton.'

In contrast with the opinions expressed by the president and hon. sec. of Leamington Y.M.C.A., the Rev. Gilbert Sadler, in a sermon on 'Spiritualism,' preached at Wimbledon recently, said :—

I cannot help thinking that the higher Spiritualism will help Christianity. It explains much that was hard to believe. It helps us to explain Jesus Christ's presence on earth after death. The perfect Spirit of Jesus was able perfectly to use the laws in Nature which made his return to earth possible. That there are these laws is shown to us not only by the appearances of Jesus, but by many similar stories that indicate the truth of this. We to-day ought to take this attitude towards the higher and more reasonable forms of Spiritualism—if these things are so then it helps our belief, and it certainly does not hinder it. It helps us to see how Jesus could cure the Centurion's servant at a distance, and how men right down the ages have had experiences that cannot be accounted for otherwise than that messengers from heaven have helped them. Unless we are going to shut our eyes we are bound to see that the veil between us and the next world—as Christ undoubtedly believed—is very thin indeed. My purpose is to break down prejudice. I believe God is revealing to us that there are angelic messengers to help us.

We commend this view of the subject to Messrs. J. W. Reid and G. G. Osborn.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.

Spiritualism and the S.P.R.

SIR,—As there has not appeared any report in 'LIGHT' of the discussion at the close of Mr. James Robertson's address on the evening of the 6th inst. on 'Spiritualism and the Society for Psychical Research,' in which I took part, I am disposed to ask space in your columns to point out that there were those present who did not endorse the severe strictures made by the lecturer, and there and then strongly deprecated the criticism passed upon that Society, and especially upon some of its prominent members who have passed away. I spoke on the spur of the moment, and I am indebted to a friend who was present for the following report of my remarks :—

'As a member of this London Spiritualist Alliance I must thank my fellow-countryman, Mr. Robertson, for his vigorous and, if he will allow me to say it, in some respects hypercritical address. I wish, however, to speak now as a member of the Society for Psychical Research, and as a former member of its Council in the good old days when I considered it an honour to have as my associates the men whom Mr. Robertson has so severely criticised—Henry Sidgwick, Frederic W. H. Myers, and Richard Hodgson.

'If Mr. Robertson had been present at the last meeting of the Society, when Sir Oliver Lodge read an excellent paper giving the results of the most recent investigations, he would, I think, have modified his rather too sweeping statements. Our lecturer must remember that the Society was instituted not only to investigate the claims made by Spiritualists of the survival of the individual consciousness after death and its power to communicate with those on earth, but its object was also to attempt an explanation of some of the deeper psychological problems which orthodox philosophy left untouched. Mr. Myers did much by his generalisation of the "Subliminal Self" to elucidate many of those difficulties, and his great work published since his death, "Human Personality and its Survival

of Bodily Death," is a credit to its distinguished author and an honour to the Society to which he belonged, and for which he did so much. I willingly admit that the Society for Psychical Research, as a society, has been slow in accepting the facts of Spiritualism. I have been reading "Thirty Years of Spiritualism," appearing in "The Two Worlds," from the pen of our lecturer, and I thank him for his interesting narrative. I find, however, that early in Mr. Robertson's investigations he, too, had a period of doubt and difficulty of belief, but after a time these were overcome, and Mr. Robertson afterwards manifested mediumistic powers, and he is to-day to be congratulated on being a well-developed psychic. There was another circumstance which contributed to his full conviction of the truths of Spiritualism. He and his family had sittings around their own fireside, but from that family circle had passed to spirit life a boy who returned to tell of his continued existence, and became a connecting link with the higher spheres. No wonder Mr. Robertson is a Spiritualist, and I am certain that if every member of the Society for Psychical Research had had such experiences as our lecturer, they all would be confirmed Spiritualists too.

'Mr. Robertson has spoken of Dr. Richard Hodgson and his investigation of Madame Blavatsky in India. From what I have read I am inclined to believe that Dr. Hodgson was misled by the Coulombs. Madame Blavatsky was indeed a fine medium, whatever else she was, and her great book, "The Secret Doctrine," is a work that I would recommend every member of this Society to study.

'Sir Oliver Lodge the other day spoke of those who were on the mountain top; Mr. Robertson is one of those who, from that elevation, have for long been held theradiations of the spirit world, but many of us are still in the tunnel—to carry out Sir Oliver's simile—striving to catch a sound, however feeble, of our co-workers on the other side. The majority of us, however, are slowly struggling up the hill side, and I, as one of these, think that I discern the dawn of a brighter day when phenomenal Spiritualism will be acknowledged as a truth of orthodox science, and spiritual philosophy accepted as the explanation of these phenomena, and also adopted as a principle for the guidance of our daily lives. When that day arrives, whether we be Psychical Researchers, Theosophists, or Spiritualists, we no doubt shall all rejoice together.'

There were many other points which, had I had time that evening, I should have liked to have replied to. I am pleased to see in 'LIGHT' of this date three excellent communications from my friends Miss Dallas and Dr. Kingston, and from your correspondent Adelaide E. Grignon, in which many of the crucial matters of discussion are brought before the notice of your readers. Miss Dallas very wisely points out that Mr. Robertson has the gift of humour—not always admitted to be a possible quality in a Scot—and that it doubtless 'took the sting out of even his severest strictures.' That indeed is true.—Yours, &c.,

A. WALLACE, M.D.

Harley-street, W.

February 22nd, 1908.

SIR,—I think that all true Spiritualists will be delighted with Mr. James Robertson's well-timed address concerning Spiritualism in relation to the Society for Psychical Research. It is only right that the noble efforts of the great workers in the past, who so unselfishly associated themselves with what, in those days, was a discredited propaganda, should be publicly recognised. The Spiritualists of to-day little know what it meant to be a Spiritualist twenty or thirty years ago, and we ought never to forget the deep debt of gratitude we owe to the pioneers of Modern Spiritualism. As to the Psychical Research Society, Spiritualists do not owe to it the least particle of gratitude. The more prominent of its members have done little else than accuse Spiritualists of folly, weakness and ignorance, and charge mediums generally with cupidity and fraud. The only outcome, so far as I can see, is that some of the leaders of the Society are at last satisfied as to the truth of spirit-return; but Professor Hare, one of the United States' most eminent scientific men, many years ago thoroughly investigated the phenomena; invented elaborate mechanical devices for testing purposes; and then wrote a large and deeply interesting volume, in which he said he had commenced by being a sceptic, but was at last thoroughly convinced of the fact that so-called 'dead' people are very much alive and can communicate with us.

The only gratifying facts disclosed by Sir Oliver Lodge's recent belated admission are that he is indebted to the literature of the last sixty years or so for having heard that there was such a thing as Spiritualism, and that he was obliged to get the services of 'mediums'—the erstwhile despised 'mediums'.

—to communicate with his vanished friends; so that he owes what little he has learnt to the pioneers and to the good and faithful services of one or two 'mediums.' He says: 'We are *beginning* to hear now and again the strokes of the pickaxes of our comrades on the other side!' All I can say is, that it is untrue to say that 'we are beginning' to hear strokes—Sir Oliver Lodge may be at the beginning, but many of us have enjoyed more or less open, frequent and satisfactory intercourse with our 'comrades on the other side' for many years; and while we welcome Sir Oliver, he is not at the head of the army, but represents the rearguard.—Yours, &c.,

H. L. P.

A New Society at Eastbourne.

SIR,—A few friends met together recently with the object of bringing magnetic and other forms of healing into public notice in Eastbourne, and of ultimately forming a society for practical and philanthropic work. It is hoped that we shall have the support of other friends and sympathisers in this neighbourhood. We have a good clairvoyant for diagnosis and can muster five or six healers and a hypnotist. Any communications will be gladly received by me at this address.—Yours, &c.,

(Mrs.) E. M. BRYDON.

16, Lascelles-terrace,
Eastbourne.

Concerning Spirits and Spirit Life.

SIR,—Permit me a few words with reference to 'A. V.'s' questions in 'LIGHT' of January 25th, and the answers to those questions published in 'LIGHT' of February 15th, which answers, to all appearance, are contradictory, although each one may be perfectly true, according to the plane from which the answer is given. Spirit planes and bodies are substantial, although unseen by normal human sight, and some of the scenes and states on those planes are very beautiful, and are, in fact, counterparts of this denser earth.

If a stranger to this planet should desire to know what it and its inhabitants are like—how they dress and live—an Egyptian, in reply, would speak of pyramids and tombs, of mosques and temples, of sandy deserts and dark-skinned inhabitants, while an Esquimaux would tell of ice and snow and solitude. One of the Western people, describing his familiar surroundings, would tell of green trees and glorious country, or even of densely packed cities with their slums and the poverty of their inhabitants. Each one would tell only of what he had seen and heard, and yet their descriptions would appear so contradictory to one who knew not, that he might naturally think he was being deceived.

Many inquirers seem to think that when once a spirit is freed from the limitations of the earthly body, it is able to soar at will throughout space and learn all the secrets of the universe. They do not understand that spirits are subject to law and are limited by their own states and conditions; and that the spirit spheres are many and varied. Spirits cannot gather knowledge in any other way than by degrees; and no state is beyond the reach of earth dwellers who are prepared and offer the right conditions for communion. The angel within man must by development become attuned to the angel without; then divine revelations may be given and received.

Let us take one seeming contradiction in the answers to 'A. V.'s' question: 'Do spirits eat?' One writer quotes Hudson Tuttle, who says that they do eat; another, giving the message of one of his guides, says they do *not* eat. Both are true of different states in the universe of spirit. Those spirits who spoke through my daughter when she was between the ages of twelve and sixteen years, mostly spirits living in happy conditions, spoke of eating fruit and drinking water and the juices of fruit. They also said that there were animals in those states where the spirits find pleasure in them; in fact, so complete is the analogy between the spirit planes and those of denser material, that many people, on awakening to consciousness on the other side of death, do not realise that they have passed its portals.

Many continue upon the lower planes for years, or even ages, quite content with what, to them, seems a heaven, until the divine spark within expands and feels its need of fuller life and greater light, and then, according to the desire thus aroused, they begin to make progress to other states. A beloved Egyptian priest, of ancient days, who ministers through my husband's mediumship in our home, said to us: 'We do not eat as you do; we draw the nourishment that sustains us from the ether surrounding us.' Thus both answers have been corroborated in our home, and we have learned *how* they are both true, although to an inquirer they appear antagonistic. It is all a matter of state.

Permit me to suggest to 'A. V.' that he should read the

literature of the movement and thus prepare himself for witnessing the phenomena. True Spiritualism is life *lived* in the power of the spirit—a growing up into that state of consciousness where spiritual things may be spiritually discerned.—Yours, &c.,

LOVELIGHT.

SIR,—Perhaps it would interest your correspondent 'A. V.' to have the views of a spirit friend, who states that *everything* (animals, flowers, &c.) that has life on the earth plane has a corresponding 'spirit life,' and that each goes to its own particular realm of life.

Spirits can tell of different experiences, but they all live and clothe themselves according to their requirements and the state to which they have progressed. As spirits advance they have greater difficulty in using earth language, and we were told that much of the philosophic teaching given through mediums is transmitted through a chain of spirits until it reaches the spirit nearest the earth, who can most easily use the instrument. This was given as the explanation of mixed teachings and expressions from the spirit side. It would be far easier for spirits to signal or symbolise their teachings if earth people could comprehend. The purer and more spiritual the atmosphere with which mediums surround themselves, the more easily can they be used, because the spirit rises beyond the trammels of the flesh.

I regret that I have been unable to reproduce the spirit's thoughts as she expressed them.—Yours, &c.,

EMMIE HOLMES.

26, Coverdale-road,
Shepherd's Bush, W.

Paul Veronese.

SIR,—Some time ago I sent you a few experiences, and I now send you another which is, I think, very interesting and suggestive.

I was presiding at a meeting of the Nottingham Spiritual Evidence Society on one occasion and had 'let myself go' a little more than usual. On sitting down again, Mrs. Peters, the medium, asked me if I was not a medium myself; she was surprised to hear that I was not, for, she said, there was a spirit of striking appearance standing behind me who was, she thought, going to give the address!

She described him as having very dark hair, pointed moustaches and beard, dark 'piercing' eyes, and as being dressed in knee breeches, velvet jacket with lace collar and cuffs. She could not see the name in full, but she could see distinctly the first letter 'V.' 'In that case,' I said, 'I have no idea who it can be. I had thought it might be an Italian ancestor of the name of Medici.' But the medium repeated that she could distinctly see a capital 'V.,' and asked if I was an artist. I told her I was not, but admired artistic work generally. 'Have you someone closely connected with you who is an artist?' she asked. I said: 'Yes, my sister.' 'Well,' she said, 'I get a strong impression that if your sister were to provide the necessary conditions this spirit would do some remarkable work through her.'

Some time afterwards I was visiting my sister at Sunningdale, and told her of this incident, but did not mention the 'V.' or anything in connection with the name, as it did not interest me and I thought it of no importance. My sister's first words were, 'I wonder if it could be Paul Veronese?' I was surprised, and asked why she should think it was the great painter who had come to me; and then I learned for the first time that Paul Veronese was connected by marriage with my ancestors. I have since seen a family chart tracing the family back to his time, the sixteenth century.

Is it not strange that a spirit should be in touch with this world 350 years after his own removal? I may say that artistic ability has cropped up in various members of the family for generations past.—Yours, &c.,

J. FRASER HEWES.

Nottingham.

Help for a Worthy Couple.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to acknowledge with hearty thanks the following contributions to the fund for Mr. and Mrs. Emms: From 'Trinidad,' 3s. 6d.; 'G. F. T.,' 5s. (being the last instalment of four promised); and from 'N. H.,' 5s.

Further donations will be gladly received and acknowledged by—Yours, &c.,

(Mrs.) M. H. WALLIS,

'Morveen,' Mountfield-road,
Finchley, N.

Man's Free Agency.

SIR,—I should like to add my protest to that of Mr. T. May, on p. 84 of 'LIGHT.' It is difficult to me to understand how anyone who has studied the philosophy of life, as unfolded in the best literature on Spiritualism, can admit that Ouida's words, quoted in 'LIGHT' for February 8th, are true in any sense when she says that : 'Tens of millions have no more soul or Godhead in them than the grains of sand, &c.' Whilst Spiritualism may throw some light upon the problem of genius, it seems to me that it is still more capable of solving the deeper problem of the apparent inequalities of human life.

Whatever views we may take regarding what is called 'free will,' it would appear to most thoughtful minds that 'man is not the arbiter of his own destiny,' and that the *appearance* of free will is a factor in outworking the purposes of the Infinite Wisdom and Love. If this is so we may rest assured that each one is in his sphere of life filling a niche in the Cosmos that without him would not be perfect. In this sense *all* are equally partakers of the divine life in humanity, and, however low down in the scale some of our fellow men and women may be, they have within them the potentialities of the angel, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary. A clearer vision is being granted to men in this 'New Age,' and many are beginning to recognise the universality of truth.

The Infinite Love, which is also Wisdom and Power, never makes a failure. That being so, not one spirit atom of life can ever be 'lost,' and however lowly or sad the lot or experience of any human being may be, *all* are equally objects of the Eternal Love. When this short span of physical existence is passed through, each will eventually find that the way of life which he has had to tread, though it may have been a painful one, will prove to have been for him 'a priceless gift.' It is right for us to do all we can to try to stem the tide of what we call sin or evil and suffering ; to better the conditions of the lowly and downtrodden ; to aid by our love and sympathy the sorrowing ones, and to act as though we possess free will, for by so doing we become co-workers with the Eternal Mind in the evolution of the race.—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE BENNER.

St. Anne's-on-Sea.

Spiritualist Society at Bristol.

SIR,—There are many Spiritualists in Bristol, but seemingly no society. If the many units would unite and form a band, authoritative facts could be given to the public at large. Should any reader living in Bristol care to join in the formation of a society I should be pleased to hear from such.—Yours, &c., S. R. EVANS.

'Sunningdale,'

41, Rosebery-road, Bristol.

Bath Occult Reprints.

SIR,—Sincerely grateful as I am for the past helpful kindnesses of friends, I regret to say that as one of the last resorts I am obliged to offer for sale the *proprietary* blocks of the following works, and consisting of : 'The Isiac Tablet,' 'The Twenty-two Tarot Keys,' 'The Virgin of the World,' 'Cabagnet's Portrait,' 'Hargrave Jennings' Seal,' &c., 'Forbidden Fruit,' 'Venus Callipyge,' 'Seal of H.B. of L.,' eight Flamel's Work, thirty-eight in all, illustrating the following works : 'Magnetic Magic,' 'Hargrave Jennings' Letters,' 'Supernatural Generation,' &c., all in good condition for use.

It goes very hard thus to cut off all chance of ever being able to issue fresh editions, but 'necessity knows no law,' so, like others reduced in circumstances, I must bow to the inevitable for my family's sake. Will inquirers please enclose stamp for reply ?—Yours, &c.,

ROBT. H. FRYAR.

2, Prospect-terrace, Bath.

The Origin of Circles.

SIR,—I am aware that Modern Spiritualism appears to have originated with the Fox family, of Hydesville, New York, in 1848, but I should like to know how the practice of sitting in a circle for spiritualistic phenomena arose.

I remember my father telling me of his sitting with others around a very large dining table in the 'fifties' of the last century, and that the table movements, &c., scared him so, that he thought the 'deil' himself must have been at work, and for ever after he would have none of it. In his latter days, however, his friendship with a noted medium somewhat convinced him that his opinions of thirty years before were not correct—but I am going from my subject, and perhaps some of your readers can tell me the origin of the spiritualistic circle.—Yours, &c., S. B. McCALLUM.

Plymouth.

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which *do not exceed twenty-five words* may be added to reports if accompanied by *six penny stamps*, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

CROYDON.—MORLAND HALL, (REAR OF) 74, LOWER ADDISCOMBE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis gave an impressive address on 'What is a Spiritualist ?' and answered questions. Next Sunday, Miss Anna Chapin.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last good addresses were delivered by Mrs. Wesley Adams. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington ; also on Monday, at 8 p.m., séance ; admission 1s. each.—A. C.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a meeting at 8, Mayall-road, Brixton, on Sunday, March 8th. At 3 p.m., Lyceum, conducted by Mr. M. Clegg. Speakers at 7 p.m. : Messrs. W. Turner, G. T. Gwinn, C. Cousins, and M. Clegg. Tea provided at 5 p.m., 6d. each.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Richmond's address on 'By what method shall we understand God, and to whom shall we pray ?' was well received and discussed. Sunday next, Mr. Snowdon Hall, on 'Living the Spiritual Life.'—W. H. S.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Cousins gave a splendid address. On the 20th a good spiritual circle was held. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Earle. Monday, at 7 p.m., Faithful Sisters. Thursday, at 8 p.m., public circle. Sunday, March 8th, London Union speakers.—W. U.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Spencer (president of the Fulham Society) delivered an instructive address on 'Spiritual Processes,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Walters on 'Self Control.' (Notices concerning séances will be given after the service.)

MANOR PARK AND EAST HAM.—OLD COUNCIL ROOMS, WAKEFIELD-STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Fleming recounted his experiences. In the evening Mr. Stebbins delivered a good address on 'Living or Dying ?' and Miss Brown gave recognised psychometric descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Frank Pearce.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Boddington gave an earnest and thoughtful address on 'A Sane Religion,' and a friend of his, Mr. Dean, kindly gave a few clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. H. F. Leaf on 'Buddha : His Life and Work,' followed by psychometry.—H. B.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton delivered an address on 'Spiritual Correspondence,' and Mrs. Atkins gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle ; at 7 p.m., Mr. Spencer. Thursday, Mr. Osborne ; Wednesday and Friday, members' developing circle.—J. L.

CHISWICK.—56, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last 'The Power of the Silence' was discussed. In the evening Mr. Samuel Keyworth's interesting address on 'Some Sacred Writings' and answers to questions were much appreciated. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle ; at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Wright, address. Monday, no meeting. Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., healing, free.—W. P.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last the services of Mr. A. Barton were much enjoyed. In the evening Mr. H. Wright gave a good address on 'The Judgment Day' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. H. White ; at 7 p.m., Madame Zeilah Lee, clairvoyance. March 8th, Mr. D. J. Davis. On the 11th inst., social evening ; tickets 6d. each.—C. J. W.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last, owing to the sudden indisposition of Miss MacCreadie, our zealous co-worker Mr. Leigh Hunt kindly gave fifteen clairvoyant descriptions with helpful and loving messages. Mr. G. Spriggs presided. Miss C. B. Laughton finely rendered a solo. As this was Mr. Hunt's first public effort as a clairvoyant his services were much appreciated by all. Sunday next, at 6.30 for 7 p.m., Mr. J. Macdonald Moore, address.—A. J. W.

SPIRITUAL MISSION : 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. M. H. Wallis's spiritual address and lucid answers to questions were much appreciated by a large audience. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. L. McBeth Bain.—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave able and interesting replies to written questions from the audience. A lady member effectively rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. E. W. Beard, trance address on 'The Value and Power of Small Things.'